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ABSTRACT

A survey was conducted of 104 Ohio academic libraries to determine how these libraries define security problems, what type of security problems existed in the libraries and what the extent of these problems was. The survey of 11 questions revealed the following: few Ohio academic libraries have a written security policy; a significant number consider material theft a problem; few libraries consider periodical mutilation to be a problem; most libraries are covered by an electronic security system; and libraries have various problems with patrons, although most are not criminal in nature. Four-year public and private institution libraries have the most serious reported security problems, while two-year technical/community and seminary libraries have few reported security problems. The questionnaire used in the study is included in the appendix. (Contains 41 references.) (Author/JLB)

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# SECURITY PROBLEMS OF OHIO ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

A Master's Research Paper submitted to the
Kent State University School of Library and Information
Science in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree Masters of Library Science

by

Michael Lorenzen

August, 1993

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## Abstract

A survey was conducted of 104 Ohio academic libraries to determine how these libraries define security problems, what type of security problems existed, and what the extent of these security problems were. The survey of 11 questions revealed the following findings: few Ohio academic libraries have a written security policy, a significant number consider material theft to be a problem, few libraries consider periodical mutilation to be a problem, most libraries are covered by an electronic security system, and libraries have various problems with patrons although most are not criminal in nature. Four-Year Public and Private institution libraries have the most serious reported security problems while Two-Year technical community and seminary libraries have few reported security problems.

Master's Research Paper by

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B.A., Bowling Green State University, 1992

M.L.S., Kent State University, 1993

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## Chapter I. Introduction

Libraries are not always safe and secure places. The recent slaying of two librarians in the Sacramento Public Library illustrates this. (See American Libraries, June 1993, Pg. 462.) The academic library is certainly not exempt from security problems. There are many potential problems in security that an academic library can face.

As public institutions, public libraries have encountered many of the problems that exist in today's society. The criminal use of public libraries' facilities (i.e. drug use, assault), the theft of public library materials, and obnoxious patron behavior have all been thoroughly documented in the library literature. (See Anderson (1986), Joyce (1982), Gothberg (1987) and Lincoln (1984).) Thus, it can be surmised that some of these same problems exist in academic libraries. Many academic libraries are under state control and are required to provide access to the general public. Academic libraries under private control usually do not prevent the general public from entering their collections. As such, academic libraries are vulnerable to security risks from the public population. Members of the academic community, both students and faculty, can also pose security problems.

The state of Ohio has a large number of academic libraries. No information exists which documents their security problems. How do Ohio academic libraries define what they consider to be a security problem? What types of security problems exist in Ohio

academic libraries? What is the extent of the different security problems in Ohio academic libraries?

Curiosity about security problems in Ohio academic libraries, the relative lack of research on academic library security problems in relation to public library security problems, and a desire to learn what academic libraries consider a security problem to be are all valid reasons to conduct a survey of all academic libraries in Ohio. A problem can not be rectified unless it is first understood thoroughly. A study of Ohio academic libraries will further the process of understanding the security problems that exist today in academic libraries.

## Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the survey is to ascertain three objectives:

1. The survey ascertains exactly how Ohio academic libraries define their security problems.

2. The survey determines the types of security problems that exist in Ohio academic libraries.

3. The survey determines the extent of security problems in Ohio academic libraries.

## Definition of Terms

The following terms are used in the research paper:

Ohio- State of the United States of America located in the Midwest portion of country. It is surrounded by the states of Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Kentucky, Indiana, and Michigan. Additionally, it is bounded on the North by Lake Erie and the Ohio portion of the lake borders the Canadian province of Ontario.

Academic Library- The library of any educational institution that offers at least an associate's degree in any field or a seminary's certificate in religion or ministry.

Security Problem- Any activity that a library considers to be inappropriate behavior on its premises. This includes any violations of the law as well as activities that are not considered illegal but are found to be disruptive to the library environment.

## Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to the state of Ohio. While the findings of the study can be used for drawing conclusions about academic libraries in other states, they are not necessarily generalizable to other kinds of libraries.

## Chapter II. Review of the Literature

Security concerns have interested librarians for most of this century. Lots of research has been done in different areas of library and archival security. Not until the 70's did a significant amount of work appear in the area of academic libraries and security. In the last decade, librarians have become much more aware of the security concerns of academic libraries and the amount of recent research reflects this. Still, much of research applies to both public and academic libraries and studies focusing exclusively on the academic library are not common. (See Olsen and Ostler (1985) and Nicely (1993).)

Research on academic library security tends to focus on three areas. (1) Who commits the crimes in academic libraries? Researchers have looked at patrons, staff, faculty, and institutional outsiders in this regard. (2) What type of crimes or security problems do people commit or cause in academic libraries? This type of research runs from studies of violent crime to disruptive patrons. (3) What is the best method of preventing security problems from occurring? These type of studies look at staff training, electronic security systems, and the concept of closed stacks. Many researchers have looked at more than one of these areas in their studies.

Richards (1979) studied the way that academic institutions treated book thefts. He surveyed academic librarians in 1978 asking them how they responded to book theft among their student

patrons. The vast majority did nothing. Richards found a pattern of inaction in the academic library to book theft. Most librarians felt that student understanding of the problem was crucial to ending book theft. Richards discovered that library faculty believed that academic institutions should openly attempt to influence student attitudes to eliminate the problem of book theft.

Sheridan (1980) looked at how library personnel can influence library security. Sheridan believed that untrained library staff were responsible for many of the library security problems. Staff unfamiliar with proper security techniques and policies make it easy for security problems to exist and they alienate patrons engaged in appropriate behavior. Sheridan concluded that library staff should be given extensive security training.

Gouke and Murfin (1980) theorized that academic libraries were the most suspectable kind of library to periodical mutilation. The two studied a large academic research library to determine its' periodical mutilation rate. They discovered that the library had a mutilation rate of 9% for periodicals. This was a drop of 23% from a previous survey of the same library. Between the studies, a gate security system had been installed. It was concluded that the security system was having an influence on patron mutilation activity.

Not all library security problems result from material theft or mutilation. Delph (1980) wrote a paper on preventing public sex in the academic library setting. Delph was concerned about the tendency of certain groups (homosexuals and students) to use

library facilities to engage in sexual activities. He called for an awareness of sexual activity in libraries. It was argued that patterns occur in libraries and that librarians can predict when and where sexual activity is likely to occur (in the evening in the fifth floor restroom, etc.). By patrolling these places and times, and by harassing suspicious patrons, librarians can make the library an unappealing location for sexual activity.

Okoye-Ikonta (1981) researched the incidences of book theft and book mutilation in Nigerian libraries. Okoye-Ikonta looked at the occurrences of these two similar kinds of behavior at thirteen Nigerian university libraries. It was concluded that there was a high rate of book theft and book mutilation in Nigerian academic libraries. Interestingly, Olorunsola (1987) followed up on academic security concerns in Nigerian libraries. He examined crimes at Ilorin University including book theft and book mutilation. Olorunsola discovered a relationship between high rates of security problems and the growth of Ilorin University. He concluded that a rapid growth in the size of a university and the size of a library collection will result in a sharp increase in security problems.

Taylor (1981) did research in the area of book mutilation. He conducted a survey of the libraries at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill looking at the problem. Taylor found that mutilation had been occurring there for a significant period of time. It was discovered that periodicals were being torn and damaged and that books were being damaged by pencil or pen marks.

Taylor concluded that more vigilance was required in preventing book mutilation and that patrons guilty of mutilation should be punished as harshly as possible without exception to discourage others.

The tendency to call for strict enforcement of security policies assumes that patron behavior is to blame for all security problems. Mast (1983) disagreed with this assumption. She looked at the problem of book theft and mutilation from the standpoint of the sociology of deviance. Mast argued that the control of unwanted behavior cannot be achieved by increasing the efficiency of library staff or the use of security technology. Instead, it was put forward that theft and mutilation are terms which are selectively applied to ambiguous events. Librarian's are responsible for much of the security problems in academic libraries because they tend not to prosecute rule violators. Mast believes this is due to the interactional and institutional contexts of librarianship itself.

Watstein (1983) looked at book mutilation and its relationship to electronic security systems. She conducted a survey of academic libraries to determine if mutilation rates go up after an electronic security system is installed. This was discovered to be true. Watstein stated that patrons are more apt to mutilate a book or periodical in order to get what they need rather than chance setting off the electronic security system by taking the entire book or periodical. As typically only one security strip is placed in each library item, this strategy is successful in defeating the

electronic security system. Because of this, mutilation rates will rise after a library installs an electronic security system.

Greenwood and McKean (1985) examined the effectiveness of electronic security systems. The main library at the University of Kentucky conducted a multiphased project to measure and reduce book loss due to theft. It was found that after installing an electronic security system, book loss rates decreased. However, Greenwood and McKean argued that a manual checking system had some advantages to an electronic security system. Among the reasons were patron deviousness in circumventing security systems and the high cost of electronic surveillance.

Olsen and Ostler (1985) researched academic libraries that had electronic security systems. Twenty-four academic libraries in the Mountains Plains Region of the United States were surveyed to evaluate the effectiveness of electronic security systems. It was found that there were two types of academic libraries using electronic security systems. One group viewed detection systems as a tool to prevent uncirculated materials from leaving the library. Another group viewed the system as a means to catch and punish thieves. Olsen and Ostler concluded that those in the second group were more successful in protecting collections.

Despite the problems of security faced by academic libraries, many libraries feel they are doing an excellent job in preventing security problems. Wurzburger (1988) reflects this. In 1987, a survey was conducted of academic libraries asking them how they felt they were doing in protecting their collections. Nearly every

institution reported that theft was low. However, the same libraries believed that security could be improved. Many of the libraries lacked electronic security systems and had small staffs. Despite this, the majority of libraries believed that they were doing an excellent job in preventing theft. Wurzburger found that academic libraries believe that increasing the number of staff is the solution to security concerns such as theft and mutilation.

The special collections of libraries are vulnerable to theft and mutilation. Valuable and irreplaceable materials are usually stored in these collections. As such, these collections are suspectable to theft from professional criminals. Otness and Otness (1988) looked at the problem of the theft of older maps from libraries. The two described what they called 'Going Plating' - the theft of valuable plates from old maps and atlases. Several steps were listed to frustrate thieves. It was speculated that most of the theft of plates was done by professional thieves.

Antwi (1989) reported on a study done at the library of Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University in Nigeria. The study found that students were the most likely class of patrons to steal books from the library. The study also found significant incidences of staff theft. Student and staff residences were searched and many library books were recovered. As a result of the study, the library of Abubakar Tafawa Balewa tightened security and introduced identification cards to users. Antwi recommends several steps for academic libraries to improve security. (1) A general amnesty week should be instituted to allow stolen books to be returned without

penalty. (2) Severe penalties should brought to bear on offenders such as expulsion for students and dismissal for staff members. (3) Library training programs should explain to students how harmful the theft of material is to the library.

Pedersen (1990) studied student perceptions of theft and mutilation. He administered a questionnaire study to students at Emporia State University in Kansas. It was learned that several assumptions about the causes of periodical and book theft and mutilation were true. (1) Student dissatisfaction or unfamiliarity with library services can result in theft and mutilation. (2) A lack of knowledge about material replacement costs and time can add to the problem. (3) A lack of concern for the needs of others often prevents students from refraining from damaging collections. (4) Few students even think of library theft and mutilation as a crime.

Collver (1990) examined the rate of periodical mutilation in academic libraries in relation to student numbers. Since 1975, the State University of New York Stony Brook Library has collected a 'Ripoff File' of copies of articles that readers have reported missing from the bound volumes of periodicals in the general, humanities, and social sciences areas. The 1978-87 records showed that 9% of articles had been stolen. Collver found that articles in the humanities are the least likely to ripped-off. Psychology articles in the social science area are the most likely to be stolen. It was found that mutilation rates in a subject area can be positively predicted from the number of students enrolled in related programs.

Schuum (1992) did a study of the kinds of periodicals most likely to be mutilated. He examined the levels and patterns of periodicals mutilation at three university libraries located in Northcentral Texas. A page-by-page examination of seven popular and seven scholarly periodicals from 1981 and 1988 was done. Schuum found that a greater proportion of popular periodicals were mutilated. This indicates that undergraduate students are the main source of theft as faculty and graduate students rely more on scholarly journals.

## Chapter III. Methodology

The methodology of the overall study was a security survey of all academic libraries in Ohio. The survey was sent to the Head of Circulation at each library. The survey was mailed in April, 1993.

The Center For the Study of Librarianship at Kent State University in Ohio provided a list of academic libraries in Ohio. One Hundred and four institutions meet the requirement of offering at least an associate's degree or a certificate in religion or ministry. Only the main library at each institution was sent a survey. Branch and regional libraries were excluded from the survey. See Appendix A for a complete listing of institutions included in the study.

The survey was sent to the Head of Circulation because it was felt that that position would be the one must likely to be aware of security problems in a library. The Head of Circulation usually is responsible for seeing that the library is opened and closed on time. Security gates are usually located near the exit which is usually right next to the Circulation Desk. When it is necessary to call the police, it is the Circulation Desk that normally does so. There have been no studies supporting the assumption that the Head of Circulation is the one must responsible for security matters. However, for the purpose of this study, this assumption has been made and it is believed that this is a correct assumption.

The questionnaire was accompanied by a cover letter (see Appendix B). The questionnaire (see Appendix C) was composed of

eleven questions. Six of these questions had multiple parts. Six of these questions were yes or no questions. Finally, three of the questions were open ended and allowed the respondent to answer as he/she wished.

## CHAPTER IV. RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

The security survey was distributed in April, 1993. One hundred and four academic libraries were sent the questionnaire. Of these, 52 (50%) returned the questionnaire by the May 1, 1993 deadline. All of the returned questionnaires were useable.

Responses to the first question show the distribution by type of academic library. Private four-year institutions accounted for 27 (51.92%) of the responses. Public four-year institutions made up eight (15.38%) of the answers. Two-Year technical/community institutions accounted for 12 (23.07%) of the responses. The remainder of the sample was composed of five (9.61%) seminary institutions. (See Table 1).

Question two responses show the number of students by type of academic institution. Private four-year institutions average 1,944 students. The lowest number reported was 435 while the highest was 7,000. Public four-year institutions average 15,370 students. The lowest number reported was 400 while the highest was 32,000. Two-Year technical/community institutions average 3,095 students. The lowest number reported was 300 while the highest was 9,174. Seminary institutions average 256 students. The lowest number reported was 85 while the highest was 681. (See Table 2).

The second part of question two asked for how many books an institution had. Responses indicate that private four-year institutions average 216,740 books. The lowest response was 8,000 while the highest was 1,000,000. Public four-year institutions

average 721,250 books. The lowest response was 12,000 while the highest was 2,000,000. Two-Year technical/community institutions average 29,092 books. The lowest response was 3000 while the highest was 105,000. Seminary institutions average 84,030 books. The lowest response was 37,000 while the highest was 121,000. (See Table 3).

Responses to the first part of question three revealed information on staff sizes. Private four-year institution libraries average 13.6 staff members. The lowest response was two while the highest was 55. Public four-year institution libraries average 44.5 staff members. The lowest response was three while the highest was 85. Two-Year technical/community institution libraries average 7.83 staff members. The lowest response was one while the highest was 18. Seminary institution libraries average 10 staff members. The lowest response was four while the highest was 23. (See Table 4).

The second part of question three asked how many staff members worked during evening hours. Responses revealed that private four-year institution libraries average 1.88 staff members in the evening. The lowest response was zero while the highest was five. Public four-year institution libraries average 3.25 staff members in the evening. The lowest response was one while the highest was six. Two-Year technical/community institution libraries average 1.91 staff members in the evening. The lowest response was zero while the highest was five. Seminary institution libraries average one staff member in the evening. All responses from the seminary

libraries indicated one staff member. (See Table 5).

Question four responses showed how many academic libraries have written security policies. Only three private four-year institution libraries (8 %) have written security policies. The remaining 23 (92 %) did not. Only one seminary library (20 %) had a written security policy. The remaining four (80 %) did not. Not a single public four-year or two-year technical library had a written security policy. Overall, only four Ohio academic libraries (7.84 %) have written security policies while 47 (92.15 %) do not. (See table 6).

Libraries having a written security policy were asked to include them with the completed questionnaire. Of the three libraries that answered in the affirmative, only two enclosed documentation. One of these was the school honor code. All of it dealt with test taking and homework assignments. To give it relevance to the question, the respondent circled the phrase, "It is understood that the spirit of the academic honor system should pervade all areas of campus life." The other enclosure dealt with entry to the library and general security procedures. It described the procedure for college related individuals and outsiders to gain access to the library. General security procedures described steps to be taken when the electronic gate system was set off, conditions for calling campus security, and the food and drink policy. Neither of the enclosures defined what the library meant by the term 'security problem'.

Responses to question five dealt with whether a library had an

electronic security system. Nineteen private four-year institutions (70.4 %) answered yes while eight (29.6 %) answered no. Every one of the public four-year institutions answered in the affirmative. Only a minority of the two-year technical/community institutions answered yes, with five (41.7 %) having an electronic security system and seven (58.3 %) lacking one. Seminary institutions had the lowest rate of electronic security system coverage as only one library answered this question positively (20 %) and four (80 %) answered negatively. Overall, 33 Ohio academic libraries (63.5 %) are covered by an electronic security system while 19 (36.5 %) are not. (See Table 7).

Respondents answering yes to question five were asked to identify the type of electronic security system that is used. Of the 33 answering yes, 23 use 3M Tattle Tape. Five use a Checkpoint System. Three use the Knogo system. One reported using the Sectronic system. One respondent described an electronic metal plate system without giving a name.

Question six was in three-parts. The first part dealt with whether theft of materials was a big problem in a library. Eight private four-year institutions (30.8 %) consider library material theft to be a problem while 18 (69.2 %) do not. Three of the four-year public institutions (37.5 %) consider library material theft to be a problem while five (62.5 %) do not. Four two-year technical/community institutions (33.3 %) consider library material theft to be a problem while eight (66.7 %) do not. Only one of the seminary libraries (20 %) considers library material theft to be a

problem while four (80 %) do not. Overall, 16 Ohio academic libraries (31.4 %) consider library material theft to be a problem while 35 (68.6 %) do not. (See Table 8).

Those answering yes to the first part of question seven were asked to estimate how books, periodicals, AV materials, or newspapers were stolen each year. The average for private four-year institutions is 307.7 stolen items a year. The lowest response was 91 while the highest was 1,000. Public four-year institutions average 197.5 stolen items a year. The lowest response was 40 while the highest was 500. The average for two-year technical/community institutions is 484 stolen items a year. The lowest response was 137 while the highest was 1,000. The average for seminary libraries is 100 stolen items a year. All responses from seminaries indicated 100 stolen items. Overall, academic libraries in Ohio that consider theft to be a problem average 311.5 stolen items a year. (See Table 9).

Responses to the third part of question six dealt with how many patrons are arrested or charged with student misconduct for library material theft in 1992. Private four-year libraries averaged .64 patron arrests. Public four-year libraries averaged 6.14 patron arrests. Two-Year technical/community libraries averaged .13 patron arrests. Seminary libraries did not have any arrests for theft of library materials. All categories of libraries had as a range a low answer of zero while the highest response for private four-year libraries was 10, for public four-year it was 24, for two-year technical/community it was 1, while

for seminary libraries it was reported that there were no arrests or charges of misconduct for library material theft. Overall, Ohio academic libraries averaged 1.49 arrests or charges of student misconduct in 1992. (See Table 10).

Responses to the first part of question seven dealt with whether the respondent felt the mutilation of periodicals was a significant problem in the library. Four private four-year institutions (13.3 %) consider periodical mutilation to be significant while 23 (76.7 %) do not. Five public four-year institutions (62.5 %) consider periodical mutilation to be significant while three (37.5 %) do not. One two-year technical/community institution (8.3 %) considers periodical mutilation to be significant while 11 (91.7 %) do not. All five seminary institutions do not believe that periodical mutilation is significant. Overall, 15.4 percent of Ohio academic institutions consider periodical mutilation to be a problem while 84.6 percent does not. (See Table 11).

The responses to the second part of question seven dealt with the percentage of periodicals mutilated. For private four-year libraries, the average is 2.78 percent. Public four-year libraries average 4.2 percent. Two-year technical/community libraries average 1.25 percent. For seminary libraries, no periodicals were mutilated. For all of the categories of academic libraries the range was a low of zero while for the highest response private four-year were five percent, public four-year were 10 percent, two-year technical/community were three percent, while the seminary

libraries reported that they had no periodical mutilation. Overall, Ohio academic libraries average a 2.33 periodical mutilation rate. (See Table 12).

The third part of question seven dealt with the number of patrons arrested or charged with student misconduct in 1992 for periodical mutilation. Responses indicated that private four-year institutions averaged 4.34 arrest in 1992. For public four-year institutions, this average was .44. Two-Year technical/community institutions averaged 1.25 in 1992. Seminary libraries once again reported no arrests. The range for all categories was a low of zero while the highest response for private four-year institutions was three, for public four-year institutions it was 15, and for two-year technical/community institutions it was one. Overall, Ohio academic libraries averaged 1.17 arrests or student misconduct charges in 1992 for periodical mutilation. (See Table 13).

Responses to question eight provided information on the number of reports of the theft of staff and patron personal belongings in 1992. Private four-year libraries averaged 3.51 reports of personal belongings theft. Public four-year libraries averaged 10.87 reports. Two-Year technical/community libraries averaged 4.58. Seminary libraries averaged .2 reports. The range for all categories of academic libraries was a low of zero reports while the highest response for private four-year libraries was 40, the highest for public four-year libraries was 60, the highest for two-year technical/community libraries was 50, and the highest response for seminary libraries was one. Overall, in 1992 Ohio academic

libraries averaged 4.24 reports of the theft of staff and patron personal belongings. (See Table 14).

Question nine asked if patrons had ever engaged in inappropriate personal behavior in the library. Responses showed that 14 private four-year institutions (51.9 %) identified inappropriate patron behavior while 13 (48.1 %) did not. Public four-year institutions had seven (87.5 %) yes answers and one (12.5 %) no answer. Two-Year technical/community institutions had two (18.2 5) yes answers and nine (81.8 %) no answers. The seminary institutions were in total agreement in indicating that no inappropriate behavior occurred in their libraries. Overall, 45 percent of Ohio academic libraries identified patrons that engage in inappropriate library behavior while 55 percent did not. (See Table 15).

Respondents were asked to define how their library defined a security problem in the second part of question nine. Responses were varied. See Appendix D for a complete listing of responses. Several responses to this question belong with the answers to question ten and have been moved there for the narrative. Several themes are apparent when examining the responses.

Twenty-two libraries (42.3 %) either gave no response to this question or indicated that there was no definition for a security problem. Written non-answers were like the following examples; "Not defined," "Not written," or "Nothing in Writing." A representative response to this question was, "We don't have a policy but we know it when we see it."

A closely related response to the question of security definition dealt with defining security problems by incorporating academic student codes and state laws. Three (5.8 %) institutions made this claim. One respondent wrote, "We don't have a formal definition but we do rely upon the University's digest of rules and regulations."

Definitions of security included disruptive or threatening behavior, named by eleven libraries (21.5 %). Rough-housing and harassment of a non-sexual nature were also included here. Setting off fire alarms and verbally thrashing staff were also cited as examples of this. One respondent wrote, "Anything that makes another person uncomfortable."

Loud talking by patrons was cited as a security issue by seven libraries (13.5 %). Group study in designated quiet areas was mentioned as was screaming and laughing. Wrote one respondent, "Noise is the biggest problem: 1. Talking in silent study areas 2. Loud talking in group study areas." Destruction and vandalism was cited by six libraries (11.5 %). Putting graffiti on walls and desks was the main example given of vandalism.

Eating and drinking in the library were cited by five libraries as a security problem (9.6 %). Smoking and other tobacco products were mentioned by three libraries (5.8 %). Fighting was mentioned by two libraries (3.8 %).

Sexual exposure and sexual harassment were listed by four libraries (7.7 %). This included unwanted sexual advances. One private four-year institution library considered male-female

friendliness to be a security problem. Wrote the respondent, "Too much familiarity between males and females is not tolerated." The respondent did not elaborate on what constituted familiarity between the sexes.

Responses to question ten dealt with criminal behavior not already mentioned in the questionnaire, such as rape or assault which occurred in 1992. Three private four-year libraries (11.5 %) had had such activity while 23 (88.5 %) had not. One public four-year library (16.7 %) had had other criminal activity while five (83.3 percent) had not. Neither two-year technical/community or seminary libraries had any reported incidences of criminal activity in 1992, not already dealt with in the questionnaire. Overall, only 8.2 percent of Ohio academic libraries had any other reported criminal activity not already considered in the questionnaire, while 91.8 percent had no such reported activity. (See Table 16).

Libraries answering "yes" were asked to describe the criminal activity. See Appendix E for a listing of answers to this question. The libraries answering affirmatively to this question gave a variety of responses.

One public four-year library described an act of sexual harassment. Wrote the respondent, "Two male patrons were seen stalking other female patrons. No criminal act resulted." A private four-year library also reported a case of sexual harassment. Wrote the respondent, "We had a case of sexual harassment and questionable behavior by a man student. The police were called - he was searched, escorted from the building and

warned not to return. He was not a local resident and he left the community."

One private four-year library claimed to have an informal student organization that was causing security problems. Wrote the respondent, "A small group of clandestine, disguised students, known as the 'Wingless Angels', like to do things such as setting off door alarms and releasing animals in the library." This response is unique to the study as no other library claimed to be dealing with a such a group.

One public four-year library reported several criminal acts. Wrote the respondent, "We have had a foot fetish freak problem. There was an assault on a police officer making the above arrest. Two patrons had a fist fight."

Many other incident were also reported. One library mentioned that several incidents of sexual exposure had occurred. Another listed an act of arson. One reported that the night cleaning crew was stealing library material. Another claimed a number of cases of sexual exposure and the theft of student textbooks.

Question eleven asked the respondents to add anything else they would like to write. See Appendix F for a complete listing of answers to this question. Most respondents left this question blank.

The best summary response was from a public four-year library. Wrote the respondent, "Library security is an on-going process that must be a part of a larger, university wide safety/security program. Ideally, it should be the responsibility of the

university law enforcement agency, coupled with input from library staff/users."

## CHAPTER V. CONCLUSIONS

This study has met its objectives by obtaining information on all three areas of inquiry on the questionnaire. This study has identified: 1). How Ohio academic libraries define their security problems; 2). The types of security problems identified in Ohio academic libraries; 3). The depth and extent of security problems in Ohio academic libraries.

Ohio academic libraries have few written definitions or guidelines for how to define a security problem. Nintey four percent of the libraries have no written security policy. Over forty-two percent of libraries indicated they had no definition of a security problem at all, written or otherwise. Another 5.8 percent relied upon definitions and guidelines developed for an institution as a whole that was not specific to the library. There is a clear need for Ohio academic libraries to write security policies.

This finding suggests some consequences, summarized by Sheridan (1980) who found that staff who were uninformed had a tendency to make security problems worse. Mast (1983) wrote that librarians who fail to prosecute rule violators are responsible for many of the security problems. If Ohio academic librarians are unsure of what a security problem is, how are they going to effectively prosecute people who pose security threats?

Ohio academic libraries who did define security problems in some form had a wide range of definitions. Small acts such as loud

talking and eating in the library were considered security concerns. Sexual harassment and exposure, fighting, and disruptive activity were some of the more serious problems considered security risks. However, few of the answers were focused enough to bring all of these concerns together. These findings also indicate a need for written security policies.

Security problems can be dealt with by category. To varying degrees library material theft, periodical mutilation, and staff and patron personal belonging theft occurred in Ohio academic libraries. More serious problems, like arson, assault, and sexual harassment, were reported infrequently. Problems such as rape and murder were not reported by any libraries.

A significant number of libraries (31.4 %) considered library material theft to be a major problem. These libraries reported on average that 311.5 items are stolen each year from Ohio academic libraries. On average, only 1.49 patrons were arrested or charged with student misconduct in 1992 for library material theft.

A small number of Ohio academic libraries (15.4 %) considered periodical mutilation to be a problem. Only public four-year institution libraries were an exception to this as the majority (62.5 %) felt periodical mutilation was a serious problem. Ohio academic libraries averaged a 2.33 percent periodical mutilation rate. On average, 1.17 patrons were arrested or charged with student misconduct in 1992 for periodical mutilation.

The reported mutilation rates for Ohio academic libraries seem excessively small. Collver (1990) and Pedersen (1990) both found

mutilation rates around nine percent in academic libraries. Also, a high number of libraries reported having electronic security systems. Watstein (1983) showed that mutilation rates increase when an electronic security system is installed. If this is the case, mutilation rates should be much higher in the state although it is possible that periodical mutilation is not an issue in Ohio. The wording of the question allowed for the respondent to estimate the rate of periodical mutilation. Responses seemed to indicate that libraries are unsure of their periodical mutilation rate. More research should be done in this area to see if Ohio academic library mutilation rates are really this low.

Ohio academic libraries averaged 4.24 arrests for the theft of staff and patron personal belongings in 1992. Forty-five percent of libraries have inappropriate patron behavior in their libraries. Only 8.2 percent of Ohio academic libraries had more serious activity that is criminal in nature, not discussed in other portions of the study.

The vast majority of Ohio academic libraries are protected by an electronic security system. Over sixty three percent indicated that they have such a system. The largest number of systems are 3M Tattle Tape. A small number of libraries use Checkpoint, Knogo, and Sectronic systems.

Overall, private and public four-year academic institutions have the highest rates of library material theft, periodical mutilation, and personal belonging theft. They also report the most problems with inappropriate patron behavior and serious

criminal acts. Still, considering the number of students these institutions have, none of these figures seem excessive. Two-Year technical/community and seminary institution libraries have few reported security problems. Apparently, security problems in seminary libraries are almost non-existent.

Table 1

Distribution by type of academic library

| Type of Academic Institution | f | % |
|---|---|---|
| Four-Year Private | 27 | 51.92 |
| Four-Year Public | 8 | 15.38 |
| Two-Year | 12 | 23.07 |
| Seminary | 5 | 9.61 |
| Total | 52 | 100.00 |

Table 2

Range of responses to question on student population

| Type of Library | Low | High | Average |
|---|---|---|---|
| Four-Year Private | 435 | 7000 | 1944 |
| Four-Year Public | 400 | 32000 | 15370 |
| Two-Year | 300 | 9174 | 3095 |
| Seminary | 85 | 681 | 256 |

Table 3

Range of responses to question on book holdings

| Type of Library | Low | High | Average |
|---|---|---|---|
| Four-Year Private | 8000 | 1000000 | 216740 |
| Four-Year Private | 12000 | 2000000 | 721250 |
| Two-Year | 3000 | 105000 | 29092 |
| Seminary | 37000 | 121000 | 84030 |

Table 4

Range of responses to question on staff size

| Type of Library | Low | High | Average |
|---|---|---|---|
| Four-Year Private | 2 | 55 | 13.60 |
| Four-Year Public | 3 | 85 | 44.50 |
| Two-Year | 1 | 18 | 7.83 |
| Seminary | 4 | 23 | 16.67 |

Table 5

Range of responses to evening staffing levels

| Type of Library | Low | High | Average |
|---|---|---|---|
| Four-Year Private | 0 | 5 | 1.88 |
| Four-Year Public | 1 | 6 | 3.25 |
| Two-Year | 0 | 5 | 1.91 |
| Seminary | 1 | 1 | 1.00 |

Table 6

Responses for existence of written security policy

| Type of Library | Y | % | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Four-Year Private | 3 | 8.00 | 23 | 92.00 |
| Four-Year Public | 0 | 0.00 | 8 | 100.00 |
| Two-Year | 0 | 0.00 | 12 | 100.00 |
| Seminary | 1 | 20.00 | 4 | 20.00 |
| Total | 4 | 7.84 | 51 | 92.15 |

Table 7

Responses to existence of electronic security system

| Type of Library | Y | % | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Four-Year Private | 19 | 70.4 | 8 | 29.6 |
| Four-Year Public | 8 | 100.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Two-Year | 5 | 41.7 | 7 | 58.3 |
| Seminary | 1 | 20.0 | 4 | 80.0 |
| Total | 33 | 63.5 | 19 | 36.5 |

Table 8

Responses to whether respondent considers theft a problem

| Type of Library | Y | % | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Four-Year Private | 8 | 30.8 | 18 | 69.2 |
| Four-Year Public | 3 | 37.5 | 5 | 62.5 |
| Two-Year | 4 | 33.3 | 8 | 66.7 |
| Seminary | 1 | 20.0 | 4 | 80.0 |
| Total | 16 | 31.4 | 35 | 68.6 |

Table 9

Range of estimated responses for book theft rates for libraries

| Type of Library | Low | High | Average |
|---|---|---|---|
| Four-Year Private | 91 | 1000 | 307.7 |
| Four-Year Public | 40 | 500 | 197.5 |
| Two-Year | 137 | 1000 | 484.0 |
| Seminary | 100 | 100 | 100.0 |
| Total Range | 40 | 1000 | 311.5 |

Table 10

Range of patrons arrested or charged with misconduct in 1992

| Type of Library | Low | High | Average |
|---|---|---|---|
| Four-Year Private | 0 | 10 | .64 |
| Four-Year Public | 0 | 24 | 6.14 |
| Two-Year | 0 | 1 | .13 |
| Seminary | 0 | 0 | .00 |
| Total Range | 0 | 24 | 1.49 |

Table 11

Responses to whether periodical mutilation is a problem

| Type of Library | Y | % | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Four-Year Private | 4 | 13.3 | 23 | 76.7 |
| Four-Year Public | 5 | 62.5 | 3 | 37.5 |
| Two-Year | 1 | 8.3 | 11 | 91.7 |
| Seminary | 0 | 0.0 | 5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 10 | 15.4 | 42 | 84.6 |

Table 12

Range of estimated responses for percent of periodicals mutilated

| Type of Library | Low | High | Average |
|---|---|---|---|
| Four-Year Private | 0% | 5% | 2.78% |
| Four-Year Public | 0% | 10% | 4.20% |
| Two-Year | 0% | 3% | 1.25% |
| Seminary | 0% | 0% | 0.00% |
| Total Range | 0% | 10% | 2.33% |

Table 13

Range of responses for patrons arrested or charged with misconduct for periodical mutilation

| Type of Library | Low | High | Average |
|---|---|---|---|
| Four-Year Private | 0 | 3 | 0.56 |
| Four-Year Public | 0 | 15 | 2.86 |
| Two-Year | 0 | 1 | 0.44 |
| Seminary | 0 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Total Range | 0 | 15 | 1.17 |

Table 14

Range of responses for reports of theft of staff or patron personal belongings

| Type of Library | Low | High | Average |
|---|---|---|---|
| Four-Year Private | 0 | 40 | 3.51 |
| Four-Year Public | 0 | 60 | 10.87 |
| Two-Year | 0 | 50 | 4.58 |
| Seminary | 0 | 1 | 0.20 |
| Total Range | 0 | 60 | 4.24 |

Table 15

Responses to whether patrons engage in inappropriate personal behavior in library

| Type of Library | Y | % | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Four-Year Private | 14 | 51.9 | 13 | 48.1 |
| Four-Year Public | 7 | 87.5 | 1 | 12.5 |
| Two-Year | 2 | 18.2 | 9 | 81.8 |
| Seminary | 0 | 00.0 | 5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 23 | 45.0 | 28 | 55.0 |

Table 16

Responses to whether other criminal behavior occurs

| Type of Library | Y | % | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Four-Year Private | 3 | 11.5 | 23 | 88.5 |
| Four-Year Public | 1 | 16.7 | 5 | 83.3 |
| Two-Year | 0 | 0.0 | 12 | 0.0 |
| Seminary | 0 | 0.0 | 5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 4 | 8.2 | 45 | 91.8 |

## Appendix A:

The following academic institutions were sent the questionnaire allowing them to participate in the study. The questionnaire was addressed to the head of circulation of the library. The list was provided by the Center for the Study of Librarianship, School of Library and Information Science, Kent State University.

Methodist Theological School in Ohio
Denison University
Urbana University
Trinity Lutheran Seminary
Columbus State Community College
Northwest Technical College
Ohio Wesleyan University
Mount Vernon Nazerene College
Otterbin College
Capital University
Ohio Dominican College
Bowling Green State University
Defiance College
Kenyon College
Circleville Bible College
Devry Institute of Technology
Ohio State University
Franklin University
Pontifical College Jospehinum
Terra Technical College
Owens Technical College
College of Mount St. Joseph
Chatfield College
Xavier University
University of Cincinnati
The College of Wooster
Walsh College
Heidelberg College
Miami University
Southern State Community College
Wilmington College
Hebrew Union College
Cincinnati Technical College
Malone College
Asdhland College
Tiffin University
Cincinnati Bible College and Seminary
Athenaeum of Ohio
Saint Mary Seminary
Cleveland State University
Dyke College
Hiram College

Mount Union College
Cleveland Institute of Art
Cuyahoga Community College
Cleveland Institute of Music
John Carroll University
Ursuline College
Kent State University
University of Akron
Notre Dame College
Youngstown State University
Lourdes College
Muskingum Area Technical College
Lorain County Community College
Lake Erie College
Davis College
Belmont Technical College
Franciscan University of Steubenville
Baldwin Wallace College
Lakeland Community College
Borromeo College of Ohio
Case Western Reserve University
University of Toledo
Muskingum College
Jefferson Technical College
Oberlin College
Otzer Hasforim of Telshe Yeshiva
Raymond Walters College
Edison State Community College
Antioch College
United Theological Seminary
Wittenberg University
Ohio University
Washington Technical College
Central State University
Miami-Jacobs College
University of Dayton
Clark State Community College
Shawnee State University
Marietta College
Hockinhg Technical College
Cedarville College
Wilberforce University
Sinclair Community College
Wright State University
Rio Grande College
Ohio Northern University
Findlay College
Bluffton College
Winebrenner Theological Seminary

## Appendix B:

Security Problems in Ohio Academic Libraries

29 February 1991

Dear Circulation Head:

I am conducting a study of academic libraries in Ohio as part of the requirements for a master's degree in library and information science at Kent State University. The information gathered from this study focuses on the various types of security problems in Ohio academic libraries and the general extent of these problems.

Although your participation in the survey is voluntary and anonymous, your cooperation and input are extremely important. The information you provide can help in letting others learn about the security problems in Ohio academic libraries. No attempt will be made to identify you or your library. If you send extra material, feel free to eliminate any markings of library identification. There is no risk involved in filling out this survey and you may withdraw at any time without penalty. As it is anonymous, there is no penalty for not participating.

I hope you will take a few minutes to complete the enclosed questionnaire. If someone of your staff can better answer the questions, feel free to pass the questionnaire on to them. The results of the survey will be available upon request.

Please return this questionnaire by May 1, 1991. Thank you for your participation. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. This project has been approved by Kent State University. If you have any questions about KSU rules for research, please call Eugene Wenninger, telephone (216) 672-2070. If you have questions about this project, please call my project advisor Dean Rosemary Du Mont at (216) 672-2782.

Sincerely,

Michael Lorenzen, Graduate Student

## Appendix C:

Security Survey of Ohio Academic Libraries

1. What kind of academic library do you work for?
   Four-Year Private ___ Four-Year Public ___
   Two-Year Technical/Community ___ Seminary ___.

2. How many students does your library have?_____. How many books does your library have?_____.

3. How many staff work for your library?___. How many are on duty during evening hours?___.

4. Does your library have a written security policy? If yes, please enclose a copy of it when you return this survey.
Yes___ No___.

5. Does your library have an electronic method of protecting library materials such as tattle tape or other similar devices?
Yes___ No___. If yes, what kind?_____.

6. Would you consider the theft of materials to be a major problem in your library? Yes___ No___. If yes, how many books, periodicals, AV materials, or newspapers do you estimate are stolen each year?___. How many patrons were arrested or charged with student misconduct in 1992 for material theft?___.

7. Is the mutilation of periodicals a significant problem in your library? Yes___ No___. What percent of your periodical collection do you estimate has been mutilated?___. How many patrons were arrested or charged with student misconduct in 1992 for periodical mutilation?___.

8. How many reports of theft or patron personal belongings did you receive in 1992?___.

9. Have patrons engaged in inappropriate personal behavior, however that is defined by your library, in your library? Yes___ No___.
How does your library define inappropriate behavior? ____

_____

_____

_____.

10. Was there any patron behavior that could be open to criminal prosecution in 1992 that is not included in the previous questions? Yes___ No___. If yes, could you be specific about this behavior without noting personal names? Were there any rapes? Assaults?_____

_____

_____

_____.

11. Please add any other comments you would like to share on this page. Your insights and perspectives are appreciated and desired. Return of this survey constitutes agreement to participate in the study. No other actions beyond the return of this survey will be required. Thank you.

## Appendix D:

Responses to question nine.

We follow the same guidelines as outlined in our student handbook.

Smoking, bringing refreshments, talking too loudly, writing on desks.

When the behavior infringes on the rights of others.

Common-sense standards of behavior.

We define inappropriate behavior or any behavior that impedes student study or makes a patron uncomfortable.

Fighting, sexual exposure.

Extreme noise; harassment of patrons and staff.

Behavior that is intended to attract attention in such a way as to disturb the library atmosphere and/or make others uncomfortable, especially in a threatening manner.

I don't believe it's defined anywhere. -Any behavior that's threatening or intimidating.

Behavior that is destructive to the library and/or persons using the facility.

Loud talking, use of food and drinking in building, sexual harassment.

We don't have a policy but we know it when we see it! Seriously, things like verbally or physically harassing patrons, smoking, going into areas off-limit to the public.

It is a subjective value, and probably every staff member has a different idea. We have a written campus standard for dress and behavior, and we don't expect blatant flaunting of that. Too much familiarity between males and females is not tolerated.

Loud talking, rough housing.

Eating/drinking in library (our most common problem), ludity, unwanted sexual advances, vandalizing library property.

Nothing in writing.

No written policy.
With no policy-no definition. Staff handles on case by case

basis. Disruptive patrons are asked to leave. We have remarkable compliance.

College catalog.

Not defined.

We have no written definition.

Call campus police.

We don't have a formal definition, but we do rely upon the university's digest of rules and regulations.

Behavior which interferes with the normal use of the library by our students and faculty.

Primarily by legal codes set forth by the state/federal government.

Anything that makes another person uncomfortable.

The usual food-drinking-tobacco problem. Cursing a staff member occasionally. Kid stuff, like library tag in the stacks. Graffiti on walls and furniture, prying on locks on windows so the windows can be opened wider in non-air conditioned areas.

X2-Male patrons seen stalking other female patrons, but no criminal act resulted.

Noise is biggest problem: 1. Talking in silent study area, 2. Loud talking in group study or quiet study area.

Noise, group study where restricted, eating/drinking.

Only loud talking.

Fighting, shouting, sabotage of materials or equipment.

Behavior that is disruptive to other patrons or library staff.

Sexual exposure; threatening to staff or another patron.

Any behavior that is disruptive and vandalism.

Any combination of behaviors that can cause disruption of normal library services, which results in gross distraction for library patrons or library staff. Campus security personnel have been called during day hours and evening hours. More and different problems seem prevalent in the evenings.

## Appendix E:

Responses to question ten.

Nothing as serious as assault. The county does have a smoking ordinance one could invoke. A small group of clandestine, disguised students, known as the Wingless Angels, like to do things such as setting off door alarms and releasing animals in the library.

Foot fetish freak problem; an assault on a police officer making one of the above arrests; two patrons had a fist fight.

We've had a few situations of a person exposing himself. No rapes or assaults reported.

Number of exposures and theft of student textbooks.

No, but we have had instances in prior years.

Don't know. All handled by campus police.

Theft-Night cleaning crew.

Fire setting.

We had a case of sexual harassment and questionable behavior by a man student. The police were called- he was searched, escorted from the building and warned not to return. He was not a local resident and left the community.

## Appendix F:

Responses to question eleven.

1. Since the installation in 1988 of our security system, book theft has been a small problem. Prior to 1988, it was serious. 2. Our school is in a rural village, and we seem (so far) to have escaped many of the problems reported by more urban institutions.

As we are a small, private school, we have never had the need to have a written security policy. This survey has caused some discussions as to whether we now should have one.

We believe our high traffic volume and use discourages many of the crimes that require secrecy. Also, we encourage a "family" atmosphere of watching out for one another. A big problem for us is late return or no return of loans. Students leave campus with our material when they withdraw.

We are considering adding a security system in the future, perhaps when we automate the catalog and circulation system.

We don't have the staff to do regular inventory and so we don't know our loss rate-we can only guess. It is higher in some subject areas than others (physical education, sports, photography, careers, medical, etc.)- in '89, our sampling revealed a loss rate across the board of about 4-5%. We allow our periodicals to circulate to students and staff only and hope that this is the reason our mutilation problem is minimal. (Our periodicals are in closed stacks.) Rumor has it that years ago the administrators told the library that having an electronic security system would show the students we don't trust them, but I can't confirm that that was actually said or not.

We have noticed an increase in boldness by students over the past few years. We have waves of theft of personal items. They move from area to area in the college. As times change so do students, yet we still think our library is low in crime.

We just completed compilation of a list of missing books totaling some 1,000 titles. This is based on books requested by patrons which are missing, it is not based on inventory.

We have a very small library in terms of number of users for the size of our collection. Our biggest threat is to bar a user who is not a student. Problems with students are referred to the Dean's Office. Professor's who don't return books can have costs deducted from their salaries.

Library security is an on-going process that must be a part of a larger, university wide safety/security program. Ideally, it should be the responsibility of the university's law enforcement

agency coupled with input from library staff/users.

We have full time campus security in the building on weekends and in the late evening. It is very important to have them since this is an urban university.

Abuse of equipment is an area you might want to explore. With more and more kinds and number of equipment, the potential for equipment damage by users increases.

The problems we have had with patrons and security have almost always been with people who have no affiliation with our institution (they are not students or faculty) or cooperating institutions. From time to time, we have had people who appear to be mentally unstable attracted to our library because of its religious nature. Security people have spoken to these individuals on several occasions which has resolved the problem. All library users who are not members of an academic institution must now sign in.

There are staff manuals that include information "dealing with disruptive behavior", "security measures", "problem patrons", etc.

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## Abstract

A survey was conducted of 104 Ohio academic libraries to determine how these libraries define security problems, what type of security problems existed, and what the extent of these security problems were. The survey of 11 questions revealed the following findings: few Ohio academic libraries have a written security policy, a significant number consider material theft to be a problem, few libraries consider periodical mutilation to be a problem, most libraries are covered by an electronic security system, and libraries have various problems with patrons although most are not criminal in nature. Four-year Public and Private institution libraries have the most serious reported security problems while Two-year technical/community and seminary libraries have few reported security problems.


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